

ASELL SCHOOLS: USING INQUIRY-BASED SCIENCE INVESTIGATIONS

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Background

In the current context of intensive scrutiny of science teaching in schools, and several rounds of funding to support this endeavour, partnerships between diverse stakeholders have been forged. ASELL Schools, funded through AMSPP, is one such partnership between scientists, engineers and science educators across Australia.

Aims

In this presentation, we report on two research questions:

- What are teachers' reflections on the various aspects of the professional learning context?
- What do teachers say they will take to their practice?

Design and methods

ASELL Schools utilises expertise from the partnership to create context specific professional learning environments to guide teachers' implementation of inquiry based science teaching with the objective of influencing teachers' professional practices. Data in the form of reflections and surveys from six workshops with 100 teacher participants has been analysed.

Results and Conclusions

Our findings indicate that teachers face particular challenges in implementing inquiry. While teachers are knowledgeable about inquiry-based teaching, strategically deciding 'when and how' to implement inquiry with the explicit intent to meet their student needs within the local context is not a trivial task. Hence inquiry in the classroom has many faces which often mask the effectiveness of inquiry espoused in research. The ASELL Schools professional learning environment aids in filling this gap.

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